

Midterm Assessment

At midterm, I asked students to complete the following in-class assessment. I did not return them to students, nor did I complete much formal analysis at that point. I did report back to students on patterns that emerged in a fairly informal review of the midterms. They were useful, however, in helping me evaluate how well students understood key concepts, how confident they felt about their own work, and what they wanted from the rest of the course.

Completely UNGRADED Midterm

Name: _____

Please define the following terms or concepts:

Intent

Use

Memory



Signs

Structure

Cultural conversation (or culture as a conversation)

Interdisciplinary analysis



For each of the concepts on the previous page, rate your level of understanding, using the following scale:

1 = I've never heard of this.

2 = I have some idea of what this is, but I don't feel comfortable defining it.

3 = I can define this, but I still feel somewhat confused about it.

4 = I feel fairly confident that I understand this, but I have a few questions.

5 = I understand this very well.



Write your rating in the left-hand margin beside each item.

Imagine that I've assigned you to write a paper analyzing how the experience of work changed in Youngstown after the mills shut down around 1980. How would you use interdisciplinary approaches to complete this assignment?



As you worked on the text analysis, text web, and reading-texts-through-history papers, what difficulties or confusions did you encounter?

How well do you think you resolved those difficulties?



What are you still confused about?

**What do you think was the greatest strength of your work on the first three projects?
What would you like to learn about during the second half of this course that we haven't yet fully explored?**

**Which of the following experiences related to this course has most helped you learn?
Note: I'm NOT asking which you most enjoyed, but which contributed the most to your understanding.**

- Readings
- Lectures
- Full class discussions
- Small group discussions
- Computer lab activities
- Materials on the course website
- Completing the assignments
- Talking with other students outside of class
- Talking with the instructor outside of class
- Reflecting on course material on my own

What should we do more of during the second half of the semester?

Write your own explanation of each of the following ideas:

In American culture, and specifically in the Youngstown area, work and class help to form individual and community identity but are also sources of conflict within the community.

Literature exists within a cultural framework, not as something separate from its culture but rather as a set of texts that are intimately involved with culture.

Interdisciplinary analysis can yield rich, complex insights into representations, including literary texts, and into the processes of identity formation, cultural negotiation, and social change. 